

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 - 34 (canceled)

Claim 35. (new) A procedure for the protection of information comprising at least one of computer software and computer readable data on a computer of a licensee of said information comprising:

furnishing a protective device to said licensee of said information directly or indirectly from a producer of said device, said device being operably connected to said computer of said licensee;

furnishing a Firm Code by said producer to a licensor of said information;

storing a Private Box Key in said device defined by and known only to said producer to certify said device as being one which is authentic from said producer;

causing said device to generate a Private Serial Key stored in said device to define said device with respect to another one of said device;

transmitting a Firm Common Key from said producer to said licenser, said Firm Common Key being determined by said Firm Code, said Firm Common Key providing for said licenser to transfer license parameters of a license for said information to said licensee;

defining a Secret Firm Key by said licenser and which is known only to said licenser;

transmitting said Secret Firm Key to said device for storage in said device;

causing said device to generate a Public Box Key from said Private Box Key and a Public Serial Key from said Private Serial Key;

transmitting said Public Box Key and said Public Serial Key to said licenser;

generating license parameters by said licenser using said Firm Code, said Secret Firm Key and said Firm Common Key;

encoding said license parameters by said licenser using said Public Box Key and said Public Serial Key and transmitting said license parameters to said device;

causing said device to decode said license parameters using said Private Box Key and said Private Serial Key;

encoding said information by said licenser with said Secret Firm Key and transmitting said information to said licensee for storage on a data medium of said licensee; and

decoding said information using said Secret Firm Key stored in said device.

Claim 36. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 35 including the step of:

validating a matching of said Firm Code and said Firm Common Key with said Private Box Key and said Private Serial Key.

Claim 37. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 35 including the step of:

using said Firm Code in combination with said Secret Firm Key to provide the encoding and decoding of said information.

Claim 38. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 35 including the steps of:

defining a User Code by said licenser;

transferring said User Code to said device; and

causing said User Code to encode and decode said information in combination with said Secret Firm Key and said Firm Code.

Claim 39. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 35 including the steps of:

defining a Serial Number by said producer and assigned to said device and adding said Serial Number to said Public Box Key and said Public Serial Key for further identifying said device.

Claim 40. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 35 wherein:

generating said Private Serial Key randomly by said device, said Private Serial Key being known only to said device.

Claim 41. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 35 wherein:

said device includes a limiter feature secure against manipulation that limits at least one of the time period of said license and the number of decodings of said information.

Claim 42. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 35 wherein:

said device is provided to include:
an interface for connection with said computer of said licensee;
a microprocessor;
a nonvolatile memory in which said license parameters are stored;
an encoder and decoder connected to said interface for the automatic decoding of said information dependent on said stored license parameters; and
means operable for generating said Private Serial Key.

Claim 43. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 42 including the step of:

providing said memory to include plural memory areas for storage of license parameters provided by plural different licensors.

Claim 44. (new) The procedure set forth in Claim 43 including the steps of:

providing said microprocessor, said memory, said encoder, said decoder, and said means for generating said Private Serial Key on a single integrated semiconductor circuit.

Claim 45. (new) A protective device for use in a procedure for the protection of information comprising at least one of computer software and computer readable data on a computer of a licensee of said information whereby:

said device is furnished to said licensee of said information directly or indirectly from a producer of said device, said device being separate from and operable to be connected to a computer of said licensee;

a Private Box Key is stored in said device defined by and known only to said producer to certify said device as being one which is authentic from said producer;

said device is operable to generate a Private Serial Key stored in said device to define said device with respect to another one of said device;

said device is operable to store therein a Secret Firm Key defined by a licenser of said information and which is known only to said licenser;

said device is operable to generate a Public Box Key from said Private Box Key and a Public Serial Key from said Private Serial Key for transmission to said licensee;

said device is operable to receive encoded license parameters from said licensor using said Public Box Key and said Public Serial Key;

said device is operable to decode said license parameters using said Private Box Key and said Private Serial Key;

said device is operable to decode said information using said Secret Firm Key stored in said device; and

said device includes:

an interface for connection with said computer of said licensee;

a microprocessor;

a nonvolatile memory in which said license parameters are stored;

an encoder and decoder connected to said interface for the automatic decoding of said information dependent on the stored license parameters; and

means operable for the production of a random secret Private Serial Key for the encoding of the transmission of the license parameters between said licensor and said licensee.

Claim 46. (new) A device in accordance with Claim 45,
wherein:

said memory includes several memory areas for the storage
of license parameters of different licensors.

Claim 47. (new) A device in accordance with Claim 45
wherein:

said microprocessor, said memory, said encoder and
decoder, and said means for the production of said Private
Serial Key (SK) are developed on a single integrated
semiconductor circuit.

Claim 48. (new) A device in accordance with Claim 45
including:

a limiter secure from manipulation that limits the time
period and/or the number of decodings of said information.